



FRIDAY NIGHT FACTS

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

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Welcome to Friday Night Facts ! It is so nice to hear from our readers. Last week several readers responded to our request for host sites for the “Conversations with OFBCI”. We are thankful for your willingness to host these meetings and especially appreciate your taking the time to read this newsletter.

Another reader asked why we were not talking about faith based initiatives in Indiana. We realized that the reader was right. We had not been highlighting the wonderful programs we have discovered all across the state. So, with this issue that changes. Each week we will bring a new initiative to your attention along with contact information. We hope that you will learn how your sister communities across the state are solving community issues. You may find the solution you need for your own community.

Faith-Based Spotlight : Loving Shepherd Ministries

Loving Shepherd Ministries (LSM) is an organization dedicated to improving the lives of children at risk for neglect and abuse through several programs designed to help these children find loving homes and mentors. LSM provides adoption assistance to families desiring to adopt in the US by providing information about the adoption agency, birth mother, foster care, special-needs and embryo adoptions. They also assist families desiring to adopt from more than 50 foreign countries. The LSM Institute for Adoption Research provides data to the adoption community on issues related to adoption and foster care. Moreover, LSM aids interested foster parents by advocating for foster parenting and foster-care-to-adopt programs.

Finally, LSM is beginning to implement its “Finding Their Voice” program. This program is designed to link Christian congregations together in supporting at-risk children and families by providing educational materials related to foster parenting, foster-care-to-adopt, and mentoring. They also encourage the development and replication of new and innovative programs related to their mission by sharing best practices with all of their affiliates. If you would like to receive more information on Loving Shepherd Ministries, make a donation, or become a liaison to LSM through the “Finding Their Voice” program, visit their website at www.loving-shepherd.org or call (260) 824-9000.

Spirit & Place, Moving and Staying November 4—20, 2005

Looking for an opportunity to get involved in events and experiences that touch lives, change thought, stimulate new ideas, spark creativity, prompt engaging conversations, build community, and inspire action all over Central Indiana? The Spirit & Place Civic Festival is looking for **volunteers** to help with its activities, prior to, during, and after the November 4 – 20, 2005, festival.

To become a Spirit & Place volunteer, please go to www.spiritandplace.org and click on "volunteer opportunities" on the left side of the home page and fill out the Volunteer Application Form. You may fill out the online form or get a PDF file that you can fax or mail back to the Spirit and Place staff.

Why is Program Monitoring Important?

Well for starters, when organizations do not comply with the grant provisions, costs that have been charged to the grant can be questioned or disallowed following an audit. Furthermore, if a program's financial management system is seriously inadequate, any funder, OFBCI, Corporation for National and Community Service, or private foundations, can stop making advance grant payments, suspend funds, terminate the grant, or demand a refund of already expended funds. If situations are truly abysmal, legal action is always an option.

Enough of the gloom and doom already! None of these actions should ever become an issue. Most of our current grantees are business savvy and they understand the power and wisdom of obtaining and maintaining government funding. During recent monitoring visits, very few findings of substance were found and in general the grantee's records were in good order and reflected quality programs. Additionally, to insure that program monitoring is not a painful experience, we have a dedicated staff of professionals in the OFBCI office just waiting to help our grantees before and after monitoring visits.

As we begin, our "Conversations with OFBCI" around the state and follow-up technical assistance with potential grantees, a significant part of our training curriculum will include methods for insuring development of program outcomes, the importance of documentation, appropriate record keeping and applying "common sense" to every aspect of program implementation.

Not only is it important for primary grantees to comply with programmatic and financial guidelines, it is also important to monitor the compliance of sub-grantees as well. At an absolute minimum, the primary grantee should evaluate the sub-grantee's financial management systems that include standard accounting practices, sufficient internal controls, a clear audit trail, and written policies and procedures concerning day-to-day operations. If primary grantees understand and appreciate these good attributes in sub-grantees, chances are good that when OFBCI comes knock'in on the door for a review, all things fiscally and programmatically will more than likely be found in compliance.!!

If you have questions or comments concerning our monitoring efforts, call Chuck Templin, Contract Compliance Officer at 317-234-3255.

Two More To The Rescue!!!!

We are pleased to announce that two more VISTA's have joined our office staff. **Christina Mauntel** will work solely with our Citizens Corps efforts. She will assist us in energizing our current chapters and growing additional chapters throughout the state. We recognize the important work of all of the Citizens Corps volunteers and want to do all we can to expand their outreach. **Johanna Amefia-Koffi** will work with the multiple Indiana Volunteer Centers and provide assistance to our Training Director. The work of volunteers is critical to the work of faith-based and community based organizations. We are pleased to have someone on staff we can turn to with these efforts. **Welcome Christina and Johanna!!**